

Musgrave An Essay

on For the knowledge

Hydrocephalus acutus

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-um, we are indebted almost entirely to modern inves-

tigation Respectfully Submitted with

a copy of my private account of the symp-

-toms in To the Faculty of the published

Homoeopathic Medical College of

Observations on the disease of the brain, in which he

gave a copy of Pennsylvania

State of Pennsylvania. But his

Twenty ninth of January 1853 attributing

all the symptoms to effects of humor on the brain

by One thousand eight hundred & fifty three

By

The first appearance John Freedley Musgrave

disease State of Pennsylvania

of Dublin, published 1799, in which he pointed

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Hydrocephalus acutus

and of the first
modern appearance which the For the knowledge
we possess relative to the nature and characteristic
symptoms of effusion of serum within the cran-
-ium, we are indebted almost entirely to modern inves-
-tigation and pathological research. It is not quite
a century, since the first accurate account of the sym-
-toms and progress of acute hydrocephalus was published
in a posthumous work by Dr Whytt, under the title of
Observations on the Propsy of the brain, in which he
gave a very elaborate account of the history, symp-
-tomatology, and progress of the disease. But his
views of its nature were merely hypothetical, attributing
all the symptoms to effects of pressure on the brain
by the effused fluid.

The first approach to a correct theory of the
disease was contained in an essay, by Dr Iqun,
of Dublin, published 1799, in which he pointed
out the affinity this disease had to the inflamma-

-tory diseases, and supported his views by the post mortem appearances which this disease presented on dissection. This view of the nature of this disease, supported by such a pillar as pathology, could not pass through the hands of the medical profession without arousing some great minds into a further investigation of the newly founded theory, in quest of its validity, and also to make new discoveries of what escaped the observations of their predecessors and assist in the perfection of the science.

And it has become a settled point by writers of the present day, that this disease is nothing more or less than inflammation of the arachnoid membrane with effusion of serum and lymph, and sometimes pus.

~~It is evident that the symptoms of this stage~~
This form of hydrocephalus affects chiefly children from the ages of two to six years; slowly manifesting itself by fever, lassitude, and pain in the head, slowness of the pulse,

contraction or dilatation of the pupil, somnolency, tendency to convulsions and paralysis.

The child that was previously able to run

Writers on this subject, have been led by the variety and complexity of the symptoms to arrange them into several groups, characteristic of different periods of the disease which are termed stages. These stages are four in number, were founded by Gölis on presumed pathological conditions of the brain at successive periods of the disorder. These are first the period of turgescence; second inflammation; third effusion; fourth paralysis.

The appearance of the child to a pale
First stage, or the period of turgescence. It is seldom that the symptoms of this stage are distinctly perceptible; so much so that in some cases they are entirely unnoticed. And when they are noticed, few are characteristic of hydrocephalus. Among the precur-

- very symptoms, are sudden changes of disposition from cheerfulness and playfulness to pettishness. The child that was previously able to run about with ease, has an unsteady gait; he raises his feet high from the ground, and is liable to fall even in walking on the level floor. On rising from a recumbent posture, or raising or moving the head suddenly, vertigo or sudden stupefaction is experienced; sometimes there is tenderness of the scalp, rigidity of the neck &c. In some cases the secretion of urine is scanty, in others the urine is turbid and flocculent. Change of the healthy appearance of the child to a pallor - loss of appetite - restless sleep, during which the child mews and groans, starts up as if frightened - alternation of creeping chills and flushes of heat, ~~willingly~~.

~~The symptoms denoting derangements of~~
This stage sometimes lasts only a few days.

hours, at other times a few days, and the
lips parched; breath has a sickly smell, with

The second stage or period of inflammation. Amongst the symptoms most frequently present in this stage are pains in the forehead and temporal region, of a violent character, also pains in the neck, abdomen, and limbs, attended with vomiting and is mostly excited by moving the child suddenly, as it is less likely to occur when kept quiet.

The head feels quite hot, the conjunctiva is sometimes slightly injected, pupil of the eye closely contracted. At this time there is a manifest aversion to light and noise, which indicate an increased sensibility of the nervous system; the mind at this time is little impaired, for correct answers to questions are given, though unwillingly. The symptoms denoting derangements of the digestive organs are numerous, the tongue

is slightly furred, nostrils always dry, and the lips cracked; breath has a sickly smell, with complete loss of appetite. The epigastric region and right hypochondriac is often tumefied and very sensitive to pressure, though in the progress of the disease the whole abdomen becomes flaccid without any proportional increase of alvine discharges. There is commonly great tendency to constipation - dysuria is sometimes complained of - pulse is quick - cuticle is dry and of an unhealthy color. At this time a vesicular eruption, at first very indistinct, but becoming more manifest towards the latter part of the disease, makes its appearance; the eruption occurs most frequently on the outer side of the arms and face. has the appearance of covering the body which is indicated by its apparent

The duration of the second stage varies according to the acuteness of the attack,

from a few hours to a week or more.

The third stage or stage of exudation. It
is a state of coma, therefore the mind
is absent. There is a slow pulse, accelerated on slight-
est motion, which is accompanied with lan-
guor and torpor; and the head is less complained
of than in the preceding stage. Squinting and
double vision now occur along with dilatation
and perfect immobility of the pupil. The child
lies quiet, not able to keep its head erect;
and is incessantly picking at its nose, lips,
or hair; and either in a fixed stare or in
spasmodic winking. Appetite in this stage
generally returns in a voracious manner.

Towards the close of this stage the soporose
condition is generally changed and the
child has the appearance of recovering its
senses, which is indicated by its apparent
noticing surrounding objects. But this is
oftentimes an aphyrexia of short duration,

and is followed in a few days by a deeper state of coma than before. The urine and stools are passed involuntarily. At this period of the disease the child generally gives utterance to a shrill piercing scream which is said to be characteristic of this disease and during its continuance the pulse becomes accelerated. If the disease should not be arrested in this stage it passes into the fourth in a few days.

The whole duration of this stage is variously stated from one to two weeks.

The duration of this stage is more variable. The fourth stage, or the stage of paralysis. The pulse is small, irregular, and hurried - stupor and sopor increase more and more - the paralytic attacks increase in number and in intensity, from slight spasmodic twitchings of the muscles of the face to vio-

-lent contractions of the muscles of the trunk
and extremities. And is usually soon follow-
ed by paralysis of one side, the opposite
side continuing to be convulsed at intervals
- complete blindness and deafness - the eye-
-lids remain half closed - tongue becomes
dirty and black looking - the breath fetid
- respiration unequal and stertorous - the
skin is burning hot with profuse perspiration
- the feet become cold - pulse gradually be-
-coming weaker and weaker and a violent
convulsion closes the scene.

The first stage is that difficult, and
The duration of this stage is more variable
than any of the others, from a few hours to
one or two weeks.

The prognosis of hydrocephalus is always
doubtful and generally unfavorable. In the
first, second, and third stages under good

treatment the prognosis may be considered favourable; but in the fourth stage recovery is rarely known to occur. When it occurs during a slow and imperfect convalescence from an acute disease or by metastasis in the course of Pertussis, Scarlet fever, difficult dentition, or other tedious and severe diseases, by which the powers of the system have been greatly reduced, the prognosis is very unfavorable.

There is an aversion to light - the diagnosis of hydrocephalus is in the first stages somewhat difficult, and it is of the utmost importance that this disease should be detected as early as possible, and physicians attending to the disorders of children, should always be on their guard, that they do not confound the early stages with some of the other diseases incidental to childhood.

The principal difficulty is to distinguish incipient hydrocephalus, from fevers produced from helminthiasis, also by the irritation of dentition, or from the infantile remittent fever. These fevers have several symptoms in common with hydrocephalus, and might be readily confounded with it, but the commencement of hydrocephalus is generally more gradual. The disorder of the stomach is more constant, especially the frequent recurrence of vomiting. There is an aversion to light - the stools are of a dark dirty green color, and glairy - the pain in the head, when fixed, is often dull than acute, but so overpowering that it does not admit of the head being raised from the pillow - sometimes it is a very acute pain at intervals, and these intervals sometimes regular in their occurrence. It darts through the centre of the brain, the child is roused with an expres-

sion of helpless anguish from the dozing, which precedes this acute pain and into which he instantly relapses. When it is gone the intermissions of the disease are very irregular. In the remittent fever the affection of the head is commonly much less obvious, the remissions being generally regular and complete, there being one in the morning or early in the forenoon, followed by an exacerbation in the afternoon, which continues through the night. The stools are usually dark brown or mud like - a glairy dark green discharge however has been sometimes observed in this fever. All organic diseases of the brain have a general resemblance to hydrocephalus and to each other. But the disorders in these cases is much more tedious than hydrocephalus. To which we may add external injuries, such as falls and blows. Causes. The predisposing causes are scro-

phulosis, early and rapid development of the cerebral organs, have been considered as among the principal predisposing causes; and children with large heads, and the fontanels remaining a long time unclosed are remarkably liable to this disease.

Treatment. In the treatment of the exciting causes are the frequent and indiscriminate use of narcotics and various preparations of mercury in the diseases incidental to dentition. And the deleterious practice of giving alcoholic drinks and carminative mixtures to infants, which is done by some people; although we find that our profound friends, the allopathic physicians, recommend this very practice, with the view to give tone and strengthen the children. To which we may add external injuries, such as falls and blows on the head - sudden suppression of

accustomed discharges, or drying up of sores behind the ears, and inflammation of the external ear. This disease is also very frequently excited by metastasis, from pertussis, scarlet fever, measles, &c., treated.

Therapeutics. In the treatment of the first stage the following remedies have been found most useful. *Acon.*, *Puls.*, *Cham.* - vertigo when sleeping, and on rising from bed - aversion to food - pale

Aconitum. Where there is a tendency to anger - easily frightened - vertigo on raising the head or on rising from a sitting posture - dimness of the eyes - startings in the sleep, restlessness, tossing from one side to the other - loss of appetite, &c. *Ars.*, *Cham.*, *Bry.*

Pulsatilla. is indicated when there is peevishness - sullen mood - restless sleep, with toss-

-ing, screaming, and starting as if in affright,
- staggering when walking - loss of appetite, -
- Should the above symptoms occur with vertigo,
flushes of heat - heat in the face in the
evening, pulsatilla is particularly indicated.

of the pupils - violent redness and heat of
~~Chamomilla~~. Perviousness and ill humour
dissatisfied with everything that is done, -
startings, uttering sudden cries - tossing about
during sleep - vertigo when stooping, and on
rising from bed - aversion to food - pale in
sunken countenance with features as if dis-
-torted by pain - wine hot & yellow with
flocculent sediment. the abdomen which
is painful to contact or pressure.

Remedies for the second stage are,
~~Bell., Merc., Ars., Arn., Bry.~~ mainly
of an oppressive nature - contraction of
~~Belladonna~~. Aching pain in the fore-
-head, during motion it is increased so

much that it obliges the patient to close his eyes - Cramp like constrictive pain in the abdomen, and inclination to vomit - drawing pain in the lower limbs - aching pain in the outer side of the neck - contraction of the pupils - violent redness and heat of the face - loss of appetite - difficult micturition, body being cool - darting pain in the forehead with sensation as if the integuments of *Mercurius*, Constrictive pain with heat and burning in the head worse in the evening and at night also redness of the conjunctiva - fetid smell from the mouth - distention of the abdomen which is painful to contact or pressure.

Bromia Headache when stooping as if *Arsenicum*, Stupifying pain generally of an oppressive nature - contraction of the pupils with a wild staring look and excessive photophobia - distention of the

abdomen and spasmodic cutting pains in the abdomen - tongue coated white - vomiting of every thing the patient eats and drinks - pains in the lower extremities as if bruised - with excessive sensitiveness to noise and light. ~~all tumbling~~
~~and winking of the eyelids~~

Arnica Headache in the head the remainder of the body being cool - darting pain in the forehead with sensation as if the integuments of the forehead were spasmodically contracted - contraction of the pupils - pains in all the limbs as if they had been bruised - putrid smell from the mouth - chapped lips tongue coated white or yellow - ~~and confusion of the mind~~ burning heat in the head pain

Bryonia Headache when stooping as if all the contents of the head would issue from the forehead - burning pain in the forehead and heat in the head. pupil insensible to the light - slow pulse - involuntary stools

Remedies for the third stage are Bell.
Cin. Hell. Op. Stram. Heyos.

Belladonna. Dilated immovable pupils sees things double - continual trembling and winking of the eyelids. the abdomen pale and haggard face with stupid Cin. Dilatation of the pupils - continual picking and boring of the nose - the whole head feels hot dull stiches in the brain, especially in the left side of the head.

Heyoscamus convulsive movements of Helleborus. The mind has no power over the body - dullness and confusion of the mind - burning heat in the head - painful stupefaction of the head as if from intoxication.

Remedies for the fourth stage are
Opium. Dilated pupil insensible to the light - slow pulse - involuntary stools

~~Opium~~ - convulsive movements of the
- complete loss of consciousness and
sensation.
- the eyes only half closed - tongue black - mouth

Stramonium. Convulsive movements
of the limbs, and especially of the upper
part of the body, and of the abdomen -
pale and haggard face with stupid
expression or redness and bloatedness
of the face - loss of consciousness and of
sensation - sometimes with cries, &c.

Hyoscyamus. Convulsive movements of
certain limbs or of the whole body - grind-
ing of the teeth - loss of consciousness
- unnoticed emission of urine, deep and
lethargic sleep with snoring. -

Remedies for the fourth stage are
Op. Cic. Cupr. Zinc.

Cannabis has been successfully employed

in Opium. Spasmodic movements of the facial muscles - convulsive trembling of the limbs - the eyes only half closed - tongue black - irregular difficult respiration - and profuse perspiration.

Cicutae. Complete loss of consciousness - that motion of the facial muscles - frequent involuntary jerkings of the lower limbs - with a crimson color of the face - and the breathing being interrupted for a few moments. do not wish to be understood as administering them

Cuprum. Convulsive movements and local distortions of the limbs - twitchings of the fingers arms and hands backwards and then again inwards, towards the body. This remedy is particularly adapted if the above symptoms occur at night.

- cuprum with this symptom look, in treating Zincium. Has been successfully employed.

in the last stage of this disease, with symptoms of incipient paralysis of the brain administered in half grain doses every two hours, until improvement set in.

and contemplate the labours of the immortal Homœopathist, Dr. Hahnemann, and his great work, the *Materia Medica or Symptomen Codex*, we may be called upon to treat, the symptoms presented must be our guide. Although certain remedies have been prescribed in the different stages of hydrocephalus, we do not wish to be understood as administering them according to the stages. The *Materia Medica or Symptomen Codex*, can in no case be dispensed with. The study of symptoms is laborious. But the mariner might as well try to do without his compass, as for the intelligent Homœopathic physician, to dispense with his symptom book, in treating the disease under consideration, as well as

as all others. Should any one who has de-
voted himself to the practice of pure Homeo-
pathy find his heart failing at the task
before him, let him rest for an instant
and contemplate the labours of the immor-
tal founder of the system. He never wearied
in the part of well doing, and enduring
sacrifices and privations for the cause of
alleviating the sufferings of his fellow
man. His example is truly worthy of im-
itation. He has shown us the path he
has strown the way comparatively with
flowers. Let us, in our study of the cause,
and symptoms of diseases, endeavour to fol-
low his suggestions; and in so doing we
may be certain it is the best that can
be done for our patients, and possess
the consciousness that we are discharging
those duties that devolve upon us to per-

- form as faithful and intelligent practitioners of Homeopathic medicine.

Hypertrophy of the Heart

Respectfully Submitted

To the Faculty of the

Homeopathic Medical College

of Pennsylvania

on the

24th day of January

One thousand eight hundred & fifty three

by

Orense O. Roberts

of
Lyndon Vermont